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Eaton, Charles Aubrey

Industry and the man

[S.I.]

[1923?]

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Box 152

Can America Remain American?

July 9
President N. M. Butler
2-4-24

"I REGARD Charles Aubrey Eaton
as the ablest authority on industrial
relations in America."

—Charles M. Schwab

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

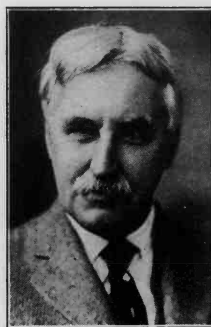
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President D. M. Butler
2-4-24

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—Charles M. Schwab

203 Feb. 20, 1924
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Industry and the Man*



CHARLES AUBREY EATON

We are face to face with the necessity of making decisions of vital importance, decisions so significant that upon our shoulders rests the fate of our country.

I want to talk to you men, heart to heart, about one or two of the decisions that we and men like us will have to make.

First and foremost, let us realize that we come of a race which alone of all the races of Europe has succeeded fairly—not completely, but fairly—in solving the problem of organizing and maintaining free self-government, carried on by republican representative institutions.

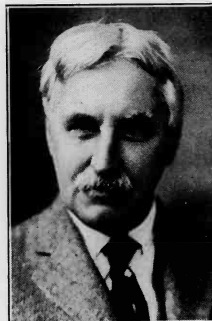
One of the decisions we have got to make is whether we will continue to develop according to the ideals of Anglo-Saxon individualism, with social progress by parliamentary procedure, or whether we will submit our lives, our institutions, and our destinies to ideas, ideals and leadership that have their origin in the perverted philosophy and feverish restlessness of nations that have never drawn a free breath.

We have got to make a choice, and make it soon,

*Address delivered by Dr. Charles Aubrey Eaton before a combined meeting of the Chamber of Commerce and Commercial Club of San Francisco.

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for we see that the present trend of government will interfere more and more with the affairs of the individual, substitute legislation and regulation for economic laws, and assume authority and responsibilities it was never intended to undertake—a dangerous menace.

Our government is not designed to handle economic developments. Our American philosophy of government holds that it exists for the purpose of guaranteeing the citizen his rights. Those rights are life, liberty and the pursuit of

happiness. It is the theory of our government that the less government interferes with the economic and personal affairs of the individual citizen,

Less Government

the better opportunity the individual has to serve his God and his country and develop his own manhood by working out his destiny on his own plan. Beyond this, the less government we have the better.

Today this American plan of government, tried and found good, is challenged by advocates of chimerical schemes that have lured other nations to ruin.

We must choose whether we will continue to take ourselves for better or worse, whether we will stick to those ideals that have stood the test of time, or abandon them in favor of the rotten ideals that have sprung up like toadstools out of rotten social conditions in Europe and Asia.

I believe with all my heart that we will choose to remain American.

I know that I speak for the vast majority of my countrymen when I say that we will not for one

minute consent to let our children be deprived of their American birthright of opportunity for individual development.

We are still too close to the soil to entertain the notion that men can be made moral or rich or intelligent by law. There is no substitute for sweat. We cannot gain, and we are bound to lose, if we let our government be divided up into groups, or cliques, or blocs, or interests, or anykind of class divisions.

Class Divisions

And this is the problem we face. We must choose between government carried on by and for real persons, and government by and for artificial persons.

Down in the Bay of Fundy country they have heavy fogs. An old man was shingling the roof of his barn and he shingled right out on the fog for half a day, and never knew the difference until he fell down and broke his neck.

In these days of unrest and uncertainty there is a great temptation to shingle on the fog, but if we will only have patience and keep our feet on the ground, the winds of truth and the sunshine of wisdom will dispel the fog, and once more we can act in safety and reason. What we all need is knowledge of the facts and faith in the changeless laws that govern human life. False teachers come to us clothed as angels of light and we are tempted to intoxicate ourselves with the alluring fancies and dreams which they dangle before our minds. The trouble with all this is the inevitable "morning after"

False Teachers

when we wake up disillusioned, disgusted, sick and unfit for the real business of life.

There is an absurd fable which shows how the judgment is warped when it turns from fact to fancy:

A certain successful promoter of wild-cat oil companies died and appeared before St. Peter. St. Peter said, "I cannot let you in here because there are a few of your kind here now and they have caused me more anxiety than all the rest put together." "Well," said the applicant for admission, "let me in and I will get rid of all the others for you."

So he was admitted and in a short time he appeared with the others of his kind who asked permission to depart and go to the regions of eternal heat. When they had gone, St. Peter asked the oil promoter how he had induced his friends to move. "Why that was easy," he replied, "I sold them the idea that there were some wonderful undeveloped oil properties in hell."

A few days later the gentleman appeared again before St. Peter and announced that he would like permission to follow his friends. St. Peter was surprised and asked the reason for so strange a decision. "Well," said the promoter, "I have been thinking over what I told the other fellows and I've come to believe that there may be something in my idea after all."

Now, let us stand off and try to take a detached view of all this turmoil and strife within which

we can dimly discern the outlines of what we call "The Industrial Problem."

In every age two factors make up what we call civilization. One is the individual man, the other the society to which he belongs.

The relation of these two to each other determines the quality of any given civilization. If the individual is ignorant, superstitious and unprogressive, and the society to which he belongs is a mere tribe, banded together for protection under the arbitrary rule of some self-appointed chieftain, you have a backward or barbarous civilization. If, on the other hand, the individual has a trained mind, is governed by right moral principles and pulls his own weight in the social boat, while at the same time the society to which he belongs is progressive, free and founded upon principles of justice, you have a high form of civilization.

Own Weight

The story of mankind has to do with the passing of men from these lower types of civilization to higher and more stable forms.

Almost from the dawn of history the struggle of men has been for political freedom. Originally, political power resided in the ruler. Gradually this power slipped down, covering first the nobles, then middle class people, until today political power has become the possession of practically all adult members of any given society.

With political power in the hands of all the people, if government is weak, dishonest and inefficient, it is because the people lack intelligence and character enough to establish the right kind of

Gulling the Gullible

government. Self-government is the hardest form of government known to man and the only form of government worth while. We cannot have successful self-government unless the people are educated for self-government, are restrained by moral law and guided by principles of politics and economics that are foundationed in fact.

Self-government always fails unless it expresses itself in representative institutions where the wisest and best among the people make and enforce the laws, and where the representatives of the people are guided and restrained by a constitution which is the concentrated wisdom of the ages.

Up to a short time ago the problems of civilization were largely political problems; the establishment of the right of men to vote, that is, to have a voice in their own government; the setting up of political and judicial institutions which should guarantee life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to all the people; the perfecting of a just system of taxation and the development of economy and efficiency in governmental procedure.

But we have come now to a new time, when purely political problems are pushed into the background and economic problems, especially in their relation to government, have come to the fore.

When life was simple, when little or no capital was necessary in industry, when employer and employee came into personal contact in normal human relations all the time, the economic problem did not seem to be urgent. But now industry

has become enormously complex. With the application of science to the laws, forces and resources of nature, man's productive power has multiplied more in a hundred years than in all preceding history. With this enormous production of wealth, the question of the just distribution of wealth became paramount. Just as each citizen has achieved a share in his political government, so now he seeks a share in the economic resources of the society to which he belongs and which he helps to govern.

At this point emerges what, for want of a better name, is known as the "Industrial Problem." Reduced to its simplest terms, there is nothing very mysterious or complex about this so-called "Problem." It is really a question of how best to organize the machinery of production and distribution so that every citizen will receive his or her fair share of the common wealth which he or she has helped to produce. It is the attempt to answer this fundamental question which has given birth to the flock of wild schemes and theories which seem able to inflame passion and obscure judgment in proportion as they separate themselves from any contact with the facts.

Personally I do not approach the study of these questions in the spirit of pessimism and gloom which seems so common today. I recognize the complexity and difficulty of the situation, but looking back over the history of mankind, I am firmly convinced that we have made and are now making progress. The pain and turmoil of the present hour are not the pangs of

Just Distribution

Progress

A New Time

death, but of birth. Our problems are not problems of decay but problems of progress and life. The world is still young and just as men have found through experience and suffering the way to go forward in the past, so out of the perplexity of this present hour we shall apply a correct and practical remedy.

True, if we look only at the surface, there are grounds for discouragement. There is serious lack of sense of moral obligation among all classes of people. Extravagance, indifference to responsibility of natural leadership, slipshod work and inefficient management are all too common.

In politics the demagogue rides the top of the wave, making his appeal to ignorance and passion and drawing attention to himself by rubbing salt into every social sore. But all this has happened many times before and the demagogue of those times went into the dust and was forgotten, while the world wagged on.

Today there are more honest men than dishonest.

A Matter of Leadership

There is enough of intelligence and character among the people to solve all our problems if we only give to these resources right leadership and right education.

If we look back over the long history of men we must remember that it is but a handful of years, as God counts time, since all the men in the world were like the other animals. When night came they crawled into some hole or cave, covered themselves with leaves and grass and shivered until the sun should rise to warm them

again. Without fire, without weapons, without social organization they stood in the chill morning of the world.

Now think of what we have. Think of our homes, beautiful with love and honor, secure under just and humane laws. Think of our wealth, widely distributed, and of the higher level of comfort of the masses not only in this country but in others. Think of what we have achieved in self-government. Think of our standards and ideals by which we measure progress. Think of our ministries to the weak and to the needy. Think of the restraints that have been placed through the power of public opinion upon force and greed, and then, be a pessimist if you can.

Here in America we have achieved the widest distribution of wealth ever known by man. In this respect we are far from perfect, but we have done so well that there is every assurance that we can do better if we will only hold on to the principles which have made us what we are and not be led astray by wild schemes that have their birth in the disordered conditions of alien countries which have yet to solve the first problems of civil liberty, let alone the profound questions of economic justice and progress.

Wealth Distribution

Our worst in America today is better than the best in any other nation. And Europe itself, with its ruin, its turmoil, its crumbling civilization and its sufferings, is better off than it was in the middle ages or after the Thirty Years War. What then is progress? Progress as I see it, is

the growing participation of more and more people in more and more of the good things of life. When we have a wide distribution of consumable wealth, we have made economic progress. When political power has been given to the people, if they are intelligent and good, we have made political progress. When we have opened the door of opportunity for education for everyone, we have made intellectual progress. And this growing participation of more and more people in more and more of the good things of life is absolutely normal, just, reasonable and right.

Industry is nothing but organized service to society.

Society is organized human association. And society pays industry according to its service.

Industry is Service

If poor management or under-production by workers makes the cost of any service supplied by any industry too high, then society is unable to buy.

The factory must put its product on the market at a price which the public can pay.

This is the final test for all theories of economic production and distribution. Whichever plan proves the cheapest and most efficient is the one which ultimately will prevail. And whichever plan is put into force someone will have to pay for everything exactly what it costs.

Within industry itself there is continuous unrest and disturbance as between employer and employee. The industrial problem to this extent is

a personal problem. It has to do with the relations between two men, two human beings, the employer and the employee.

And these two men have one fundamental objective in common. They both want to get ahead in the world, to better their condition, to increase their buying power, to insure themselves and their families against weakness and want in old age.

It would seem to be a part of the duty of the employer as well as his privilege to recognize this normal desire on the part of the employee and help him to realize it. It would seem to be normal for the employee to recognize this desire on the part of the employer and help him to realize it. But as things are now, when the employee demands a larger share, the employer is too often under the necessity of checkmating him. So that instead of spending his time figuring out ways and means whereby the worker in the factory can increase his income, he often has to devote his time and strength to an effort to keep the employee from increasing his income. The absurdity goes still further when the employee devotes his efforts to keeping the employer from making anything.

Absurd Opposition

Now is it possible for these two men to get together?

Let us ask what, if anything, they have in common beyond this normal desire to get ahead.

Suppose that the employer and employee in any given industry simply as men and citizens, began to think first, about what they have in common, and

second, how they can best equip themselves for co-operation in production and for improvement in their economic return.

It seems absurd that anyone should deny that employer and employee have much in common, but one seldom hears of this common ground which lies between them. To begin with, they both want to get ahead in the world, if they are normal human beings. We take it for granted that both at heart are honest and sincere men, amenable to reason and intelligent enough to know from experience that there is no easy way to get rich.

Employer and employee as men are born the same way, think and feel and live under the same spiritual and material laws, and die in exactly the same way. Their mental, moral and physical set-up is identical. There may be a difference in degree so far as endowment is concerned, but there is no difference in kind between them.

Their fundamental human relationships are identical.

Both are governed by exactly the same economic laws. The employer cannot for long pay unearned wages, nor enjoy unearned profits. The employee cannot for long receive unearned wages, nor in the long run can he successfully live unless by his own efforts he makes a living for himself.

As citizens in the community both employer and employee want good government, good schools and churches, first class sanitation, good roads and markets. The conditions which make Ameri-

can life the easiest and best in the world, they both desire for themselves and for their families. Suppose in the next place that employer and employee give thought to their mutual duties and responsibilities, one to the other.

The responsibilities of the employer are, first, that he shall recognize his responsibility as national leader and champion of his own employees. Second, that he shall cultivate a real human interest, imagination, understanding and sympathy towards every legitimate aspiration of the employee. Third, that he shall give to his industry good management, which means right conditions of work and training, and opportunity for self-development, spiritual and material, so that the employee may achieve a maximum of initiative and production.

The responsibilities of employee to employer are equally clear, equally simple and equally reasonable. It is the duty of the employee to cultivate a reasonable and just attitude of mind. He must recognize those changeless economic and moral laws which govern his job and himself as well as every other man and job in the world. He must give as much emphasis to his duty as he does to his rights. He must earnestly co-operate with the employer if the business and his job is to be a success, and if the employer is wise enough to furnish him with opportunity to develop himself, he must meet the employer half way, and endeavor to cultivate in himself a maximum of initiative and productive capacity.

Responsibility and Understanding

Relation Identical

Common Ground

It is as plain as a pikestaff that this attitude of mind and this human method of conduct will and does result in greater production, and out of a higher production will and does come higher wages, a higher and better level of living, and an enlarged and enriched manhood.

There is no doubt that employer and employee will get together on this common reasonable ground in full cooperation for mutual advantage. It is being done every day in a growing number of industries. When employer and employee begin to think in terms of the whole problem they soon come to know and trust each other.

The foundation of all right relations is knowledge of the facts and faith in each other's sincerity. Most men are square. All they need is to know the truth. If they are shown how and why they will try to do what is right by each other.

Of course we have with us today as we have had in every period of history irrational and unbalanced extremists. At one extreme is the red radical who believes that we can get a bigger harvest if we will only destroy all the seed grain. At the other extreme is the white reactionary whose idea is to keep all the seed grain locked up in a cellar and let none of it be thrown away on the fields.

But between these unbalanced extremes stands the great army of sane, everyday folks who pay a hundred cents on the dollar; pull their own weight in the boat; produce what society needs;

who know that there is no substitute for sweat; that you cannot safely navigate a ship without the help of somebody who knows navigation; and that you cannot get more meat out of an egg than there is in it, no matter how fine your theory or entrancing your eloquence.

But all this is only a part of a greater problem. Today our nation is in contact with every nation, breed and creed; with every political, moral and economic factor now affecting the lives of men. A vast tumult of wind and wave storms over and about us. And the central question which we must ask and answer is—

CAN AMERICA REMAIN AMERICAN?

Can we keep alive our fundamental principles of government by consent of the governed; progress by parliamentary procedure and not by revolution or class strife; absolute equality before the law; equal opportunity for every man to realize all that he is capable of realizing by his own initiative and effort; and the perpetuation of these principles under representative institutions?

We must decide whether our industrial and economic life shall continue on the basis of American individualism or upon the basis of Marxian Socialism or Russian Communism.

We must decide whether we shall continue as a republic governed by all the people through representative institutions or degenerate into a chaos of class strife.

We must decide whether the years of struggle, loss, failure, triumph and testing of our free institutions which have made us the richest, most

prosperous, most progressive people in the world, shall be scrapped, and some wild dream substituted, which has its origin in the degenerated brain of men who never breathed a free breath or cast a free vote.

Drifting We are adrift upon a storm-swept sea. The only star that shines for us is the pole star of American freedom—the will to be free, the passion for liberty. Shall we steer our course by this star that has flamed in the stormy heaven as the guide of our fathers, or shall we follow some will-of-the-wisp into the shoals and destruction of class hate, class strife and national suicide?

To answer these questions, our only need is intelligence and character among our people. Since the people must answer these questions—economic social, political—they can do so only as they think right and are influenced by right moral principles. To think right and do justly—this is the price of our national existence and individual safety.

How shall we achieve this end? We have aliens among us who are alien in mind as well as breed. We have Americans among us who are drifting on a flood of sentimentality and self-indulgence, who substitute fiction for facts and ignore history's record.

We have those who ferment misunderstanding between employer and employee; who would array "class" against "class," section against section, creed against creed, augmented and fortified in their efforts by persistent propaganda from blood-crazed Europe.

Now, I haven't any cure-all for this dangerous condition in which propaganda is leading many people against their own better judgment, which would pull them in the right direction. I don't know any way we can rub a lamp and work a miracle. But I do know two things:

The first is that our men and women in America are bound to follow leadership of some kind, and if they do not get the right kind they will follow the kind that is wrong.

The second is that if they get sound leadership and facts we are a long way toward solving our most serious problems.

The other night I heard a great orator addressing three thousand people. His subject was "Abraham Lincoln." He pointed to the life of Lincoln to illustrate opportunity in America. He showed how Lincoln raised himself from the humblest beginning to the highest office in the United States.

As I was leaving the hall, I heard one young chap say to another, "Maybe a fellow could do that in Lincoln's day, but times have changed. You can't do it these days!"

And he looked as though he really believed what he was saying. The fellow with him nodded his head in approval.

Unfortunately the young chap instead of giving out information to his companion was giving out misinformation. He did not have the facts.

The biggest job in the World is managing the United States. Out of the twelve men who are

**Wavering
Faith**

today at its head—the President, the Vice-President, and ten cabinet members who manage its ten departments—NINE BEGAN LIFE WITHOUT A DOLLAR!

Eight out of the nine who began stone broke started by working with their hands for wages.

They began life just as Lincoln did, in the usual American way.

Each of them began with nothing in the world but his American ambition.

And the first thing the ambition did was to land a job.

When each of them got his first job he didn't spend a lot of time watching the clock or doing as little work as he could on the job. He didn't kick because someone else had what looked like an easier job.

Ambition

The ambition that landed the job led each of these eight young fellows to do his best work, and make good.

And because each was good to his job, the job was good to him.

So from each job to a better one they promoted themselves until today these eight men who started in life penniless, working with their hands for wages are holding down eight just about as big and responsible jobs as there are in the world.

The politics of the eight have nothing to do with the case. Turn back to other administrations of different political faith and you will find just as many self-made men. Most of the men who

hold down the biggest jobs and highest honors in America today were boys who started poor.

The biggest oil business, the biggest railroad, the biggest packing house, the biggest lumber business, the biggest steel concern, the biggest bank, the largest shoe factory, the organization that produces more automobiles than any other in the world,—all these great enterprises are headed by men who began at the bottom and worked their way to the top by their own pluck and perseverance.

Began at the Bottom

Those eight men in Washington are not supermen. They are regular, flesh-and-blood fellows like the rest of us. But they are living proof that the door of opportunity stands open in our day just as it did in Lincoln's day to the humblest boy in America. None of these eight high government officers who began life as manual workers would be sitting in the Cabinet at Washington and helping to manage the United States if he had been a fellow of the Kill-Joy variety.

None of them would be where he is now if he had started on his first job with the idea that the door of opportunity was closed against him. That idea would have put a damper on his ability and poured cold water on the fires of his ambition.

The prizes of life go to men who show faith in themselves and their opportunities.

The young chap who remarked, "You can't do it these days," no doubt ignorantly believed what he was saying.

A man without facts is a man in the dark.

Our one instrument of defense and safety is
EDUCATION.

A great nation-wide program of real education.

Education in and throughout the industries!

We need beyond all else an education that teaches
men to think, and judge and act according to

Education

eternal standards of truth—an education
that will train and inspire each man to a
maximum of initiative and production—an educa-
tion that serves to kindle his ambition, give him
an objective in life, co-ordinate his mind and heart
and body, cultivate loyalty and co-operation, make
work a sacrament and thrift a joy; in a word, an
education that instills manhood in the highest
sense in each and every one of us.

The needed education in industry lies in furnish-
ing facts where they are lacking or in doubt.

The man who has facts to go on is master of his
own powers—he is educated for his life's work.
He may know little of book-learning, but he is
wise in manhood and the secrets of great living.
Such is the education that will cause us individu-
ally and collectively to grow in strength of
character—that will influence us to associate our-
selves with others, not for destruction, but for
co-operation and service—that will inspire ac-
complishment and facilitate progress—that will
bind our Nation together as one great family
united in loyalty, faith and honor—and carry us
on and on until we can see clearly the old and
new world relations which are to test our manhood
and at the same time give us our supreme oppor-
tunity in our own country.

In Philadelphia, the historic cradle of American
liberty, we have been building a national insti-
tution for this very purpose.

In earlier days, the old town pump that stood in
the middle of the village green was patronized by
high and low, rich and poor, fortunate and un-
fortunate. One and all, when they wanted to get
pure water, came to the town pump.

And the town pump never went dry. In fact, the
more water the folks drew, the clearer, and
purer came the neverfailing stream.

Like the old town pump, the American Educational
Association is a neverfailing source of supply of
truth to which come folks from every walk in life
in search for facts on which they can depend
absolutely. The unskilled laborer; the highly
trained mechanic or artisan; the union man, the
non-union man; the closed shop advocate and
the open shop believer; the captain of industry;
the banker, the merchant, the lawyer, politician,
statesman, teacher, or student, all come to drink
their fill of facts at this fountain of impartial
knowledge.

Facts

Its purpose is "to inquire into the ways and means
of encouraging character building, the habit of
thrift, cultivation of health and the application of
good management to every-day affairs, on the
part of young and old alike, with a view to stimu-
lating individual advancement and success, based
on industry, thrift and self-improvement from
year to year; and as a result of such inquiry to
disseminate by lectures and talks and by con-
structive and helpful literature which may be
offered from responsible sources, true views of

the fundamental economic and social laws and forces on which all self-improvement must be based, and thus to carry education beyond the school-room and into the active working years of adult life."

In brief, the mission of this great institution which is now functioning in Philadelphia on a national scale is to supply an undisputed source or reliable information at which any man can apply for the facts he needs, or through which he can convey them to others to whom he thinks they will be of value.

As almost every day of our lives we are called upon to witness destructive propaganda and its appalling effects, let judgment rule our heads.

Let us neither be hasty in acting or lulled to inaction by a false sense of security.

Rather let us face the situation fairly and squarely and work out the problem to its correct solution. IF THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF INDIVIDUALISM, IF AMERICAN INDUSTRIES, IF THE AMERICAN FORM OF GOVERNMENT, IF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION IS WORTH ANYTHING TO US IT IS WORTH SAVING. WE KNOW OF NONE BETTER—OF NONE WHICH HAS SO WELL STOOD THE TEST OF TRIAL AND TIME.

In the dark days of the War, when the priceless things for which our fathers lived and died were in danger, men of all degrees offered themselves for their country's sake.

Is our obligation any less when the enemy is within our gates?

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